

# IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION BY USING BUZZ GROUP TECHNIQUE

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## Abstract

The purpose of conducting this research was to prove whether or not the students' reading comprehension can be improved through buzz group technique. The researcher applied a pre-experimental research design. The sample of this research was the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 19 Palu selected by using purposive sampling. The experimental group was VIIC consisting of 20 students. The instrument of data collection was a test which was given to the research sample as pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was used to measure the students' reading comprehension before the researcher gave the treatment; and post-test was used to measure the students' reading comprehension after the treatment was given. The data were analyzed statistically. The result of data analysis showed that the hypothesis was accepted by regarding to the analysis that t-counted (8.341) was greater than the t-table (1.729). The degree of freedom (df) of the table was  $20-1 = 19$ . The level of significance counted was set up 0.05. It means that buzz group technique can improve the students' reading comprehension at SMP Negeri 19 Palu.

**Keywords:** Improving; Reading Comprehension; Buzz Group Technique

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the ways to communicate in written forms. A writer puts his idea on the page and a reader tries to understand the author's ideas and thinks about what he has read. Because reading is used to communicate, when the reader needs to figure out what is being read. In other words, one should comprehend or understand the ideas. According to Tarigan (1997:11), "Reading is a process done and used by a reader to get message sent through written media". It means that through reading, someone will get information or message needed. We have to know that reading is an active process. Reading requires cooperation between eyes movement, brainwork and senses. Also, it sometimes needs oral cavity if we practice reading aloud.

Reading is not only to get information but it needs understanding and comprehension to get some points from the text. In this case, reading and understanding are related to each other. Reading itself contains the activity to understand a better information in line with

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reading text. In order to understand or to get points from text, we need comprehension for it. Therefore, reading cannot be separated from comprehension. According to Sheng (2000:13), "Comprehension is the understanding of the meaning of the written material and covers the conscious strategies that lead to understand". Therefore, it is better for the students train themselves to read well and have high comprehension in reading.

Comprehension refers to a skill or an ability to understand. According to Aswad (1990:145), "Comprehension is always directed and controlled by the needs and purposes of reader. Therefore, the reader cannot read with good comprehension if the subject of the text is one that does not interest the reader." In this case, if the reader finds enjoyable and is interested in reading text, she or he will find the needs as purposes of the reading text.

In conclusion, reading comprehension consists of two words; reading and comprehension. Reading comprehension is a complex and complicated dialogue process, which is done by the author and the reader to process the meaningful interpretation or written verbal symbols through medium of writing.

Teaching English as a second language does not simply consist of instructing students in the development of linguistic elements but also helping students understand socio-cultural aspects, enabling them to engage in real and effective communication.

Based on preliminary research at seventh grade science major of SMP Negeri 19 Palu, There were many problems faced by the students in learning especially reading comprehension. The most common problem was they were still lack of vocabulary. Besides, they often failed in answering the questions after giving particular passage because they could not understand the passage itself. Therefore, sometimes they only paid attention to the meaning of word one by one rather than understood the whole sentences contextually.

Teacher should provide a comfortable class condition in order to motivate the students to learn English. The teacher should also explore and develop effective ways or technique. It is important for the teacher to prepare the technique in teaching English especially in teaching reading. There are several techniques that can be used to help students in developing their reading comprehension. One of them is buzz group technique. The researcher was also interested in applying this technique in teaching the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 19 Palu. This technique favors the active and total participation, stimulates the responsibility and enthusiasm. On the other hand, the speed (few minutes for each phase are given) develops the time effectiveness.

Typically Buzz Group technique serves as warm up to whole-class discussion. It is effective for generating information and ideas in short period time. According to Barkley, et

al. (2001:112), “Buzz group technique is a team of four to six students that are formed quickly and extemporaneously to respond to course-related questions in order to get ideas that are generated with a feedback and discussed by whole group”. Each group can respond to more questions. In fact, some students have trouble participating in large group discussions or meetings. Therefore by dividing to whole class into small groups, more students have the opportunity to express their thoughts. Because students have had a chance to practice their comments and to increase their repertoire of ideas in their buzz groups, the whole-class discussion that follows is often richer and more participatory.

McKeachie (1994:232) defines, “Buzz groups technique as a technique to ensure student participation in large classes”. He state that in teaching learning process, when the teacher becomes to a concept that lends itself to discussion, teacher asks students to form groups of five to six people to talk about the topic in reading text. Teacher instructs students to make sure each member of the group contributes at least one idea to the discussion. After 10-15 minutes, some of the groups report the ideas and teacher records their main points on the blackboard and make the conclusion. Using buzz group technique, students would have a fantastic forum for sharing ideas in reading classroom.

Based on the statement above, the researcher formulated the problem statement as follow: *can the use of buzz group technique improve the students’ reading comprehension of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 19 Palu?* The aim was to find out the application of buzz group technique can improve reading comprehension of the grade seventh students at SMP Negeri 19 Palu.

## METHODOLOGY

In this research, the researcher used pre-experimental research design. There was one class as the sample. Pre-test and post-test were given to the sample. The design of this research as proposed by Arikunto (2006:86) is follows:

$Q_1 \qquad \qquad X \qquad \qquad Q_2$

Where:

$Q_1$  : pre-test  
 $X$  : treatment  
 $Q_2$  : post-test

Population is a group of people, things or events. As Gay (1996:112) states, “Population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she or he would like

the result of the study to be general”. Thus, the population of this research was all the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 19 Palu. There were 80 students in four parallel classes. The sample must represent the condition of the population. For that reason, the researcher took VIIC as the sample. To select it, the researcher applied purposive sampling because every class of population has the same quality such as the same material, teacher, and time allocation.

This research has two variables, they are dependent and independent variable. The dependent variable of this research is the students’ reading comprehension while the independent variable is buzz group technique.

In collecting the data, the researcher used test consisting of pre-test and post-test. The tests were used to know whether the treatment was effective or not. Also, the researcher could see the students’ progress after they were given the treatment. The scoring system and the scoring rubric can be seen in the following table:

**Table 1**  
**The Scoring System of the Test**

| No           | Kinds of Test    | Number of Items | Score of Items | Maximum Score |
|--------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1            | Essay            | 10              | 3              | 30            |
| 2            | True-False items | 10              | 1              | 10            |
| <b>Total</b> |                  |                 |                | <b>40</b>     |

**Table 2**  
**The Scoring Rubric of the Essay Test**

| No | Description                                    | Scores |
|----|--|--------|
| 1  | Correct content, grammar, and spelling         | 3      |
| 2  | Correct content and grammar Incorrect spelling | 2      |
| 3  | Correct content incorrect grammar and spelling | 1.5    |
| 4  | Incorrect content                              | 1      |
| 5  | No answer                                      | 0      |

After delivering the pre-test to the students, the researcher conducted her treatment which was applied for eight times. To know the progress of students after getting the treatment, the researcher delivered post-test at the last meeting.

To determine the individual standard scores, the researcher counted the raw scores obtained by the students. The researcher used a formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:240) as follows:

$$x = \frac{\sum x}{N} \times 100$$

Where :

X = standard score  
 $\sum$  = mean score  
 N = maximum score  
 100 = reduction factor

To compute mean score of the class on pre-test and post-test, the researcher used the following formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:25) :

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where :

M = mean score  
 $\sum x$  = sum of the scores  
 N = number of students

After having the mean of pre-test and post-test, the researcher counted the square of the deviation proposed by Arikunto (2006:308) as follows:

$$\sum x^2 d = \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}$$

Where:

$\sum x^2 d$  = sum of square deviation  
 $\sum^2 d$  = sum of deviation  
 N = number of students

After having the mean of pre-test and post-test, the researcher analyzed the effectiveness of the treatment by applying the formula design proposed by Arikunto (2006:349) as follows:

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}}$$

Where:

$t$  = t-counted

$Md$  = mean deviation of pretest and posttest difference

$\sum x^2d$  = sum of square deviation

$N$  = number of students

1 = constant number

## FINDINGS

The data from pre-test and post-test were analyzed statistically. The researcher gave the pre-test to measure the students' score in reading comprehension before giving the treatment. The researcher used the test into two forms: essay test and true-false test. The test contains 20 items. In other words, after finishing the treatment, the researcher gave post-test to the students in order to measure whether the use of buzz group technique improve the students' reading comprehension of grade seventh students SMP Negeri 19 Palu or not.

The researcher administered test to the students. The mean score of the pre-test was 66.75. The mean score of post-test was 75.975. After getting the mean score of the pre-test and post test, the researcher continued to count the mean deviation and the square deviation. The result can be seen in the following tables:

**Table 1**  
**The Score of Deviation and Square in Pre-test and Post-test of Experimental Group**

| No           | Initial Names | Students' Score |              | Deviation  | Square Deviation |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|------------------|
|              |               | Post-test       | Pre-test     | D          | $(d)^2$          |
| 1            | Afr           | 57.5            | 50           | 7,5        | 56.25            |
| 2            | Aaz           | 75              | 60           | 15         | 225              |
| 3            | Ahy           | 87.5            | 80           | 7,5        | 56,25            |
| 4            | Als           | 80              | 65           | 15         | 225              |
| 5            | Amw           | 75              | 70           | 5          | 25               |
| 6            | Amd           | 67.5            | 52.5         | 15         | 225              |
| 7            | Ayg           | 80              | 70           | 10         | 100              |
| 8            | Dna           | 65              | 60           | 5          | 25               |
| 9            | Ekp           | 62.5            | 55           | 7.5        | 56.25            |
| 10           | Ewp           | 82.5            | 62.5         | 20         | 400              |
| 11           | Fdm           | 70              | 62.5         | 7.5        | 56.25            |
| 12           | Fia           | 65              | 52.5         | 2.5        | 6.25             |
| 13           | Gln           | 75              | 65           | 10         | 100              |
| 14           | Jis           | 80              | 70           | 10         | 100              |
| 15           | Mrv           | 85              | 80           | 5          | 25               |
| 16           | Mab           | 95              | 87.5         | 7.5        | 56.25            |
| 17           | Nts           | 82.5            | 77.5         | 5          | 25               |
| 18           | Pur           | 85              | 80           | 5          | 25               |
| 19           | Raz           | 85              | 72.5         | 12.5       | 156.25           |
| 20           | Saf           | 65              | 62.5         | 2.5        | 6.25             |
| <b>Total</b> |               | <b>1.519.5</b>  | <b>1.335</b> | <b>175</b> | <b>1.950</b>     |

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After computing the deviation score between pre-test and post-test score, the researcher computed the mean deviation of the students' score that presented below:

$$\begin{aligned} Md &= \frac{\sum d}{N} \\ &= \frac{175}{20} \\ &= 8.75 \end{aligned}$$

After getting the mean deviation, the researcher computed the sum of square deviation as shown below:

$$\begin{aligned} \sum x^2 d &= \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N} \\ &= 1.950 - \frac{(175)^2}{20} \\ &= 1.950 - \frac{30625}{20} \\ &= 1,950 - 1531.25 \\ &= 418.75 \end{aligned}$$

After having the sum of the square deviation of the group, the researcher needs to analyze the data statistically in order to know the significant difference of pre-test and post-test by using t-test formula as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} t &= \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}} \\ t &= \frac{8.75}{\sqrt{\frac{418.75}{20 \times 19}}} \\ t &= \frac{8.75}{\sqrt{\frac{418.75}{380}}} \\ t &= \frac{8.75}{\sqrt{1.101}} \\ t &= \frac{8.75}{1.049} \\ t &= 8.341 \end{aligned}$$

The result of the test showed that there was a significant difference of the students' achievement in reading comprehension before and after the researcher gave the treatment. This was proved by the testing hypothesis. The researcher found that t-counted value (8.341) was greater than t-table value (1.729). It means that the application of buzz group technique can significantly improve the reading comprehension of the students.

## DISCUSSION

The use of buzz group technique has contributed to reading comprehension of the seventh grade student of SMP Negeri 19 Palu. It was proven by the research result. There was a significant improvement of the students' reading comprehension after the researcher gave the treatment by using buzz group technique. The use of buzz group technique could make the students interested to read. In doing the research, the researcher focuses on comprehensibility and accuracy containing descriptive text as part of buzz group technique. In this research, the researcher did not only focus on the topic that was taught, but also taught the students to make a prediction, guided them to discuss the text in their buzz groups and asked questions based on what they read. The standard score at SMPN 19 Palu was 75. The students' percentage in pre-test was only 30% of students who could pass the passing grade of comprehensibility, 20% could pass the passing grade of accuracy. It means that the students' reading skill before the researcher gave the treatment was very poor.

After knowing the students' score in the pre-test, the researcher gave the treatment to the students by using buzz group technique to improve students' reading comprehension. In giving treatment, the researcher divided several steps. Firstly, the researcher divided students into some buzz groups that consisted of four students per sub-group. Secondly, the researcher distributed the descriptive text. Thirdly, the researcher asked the students to understand the content and found the main idea of the text. Fourthly, the researcher gave the students worksheet and asked them to discuss task in their worksheet in buzz group. Fifthly, the researcher asked the students to find difficult words and looked the meaning in the dictionary. Lastly, the students reported their result discussion and made conclusion of the text. By using buzz group technique, the students had a chance to practice their comments, to increase their repertoire of ideas in their buzz groups and great motivation of reading. The students felt easy in accepting the reading materials given by the researcher.

After conducting the treatment, the researcher gave the post-test to the students. The result of post-test was there is a significant progress between the result in the pre-test and the result in the post-test after they were given treatment by using buzz group technique. The students' percentage who could pass the passing grade of comprehensibility in post-test was 65%, 50% could pass the passing grade of accuracy. It means that in comprehensibility the percentage increased from 30% in pre-test to 65% in post-test. The increasing number can be seen in the accuracy which is increasing from 20% in the pre-test to 50% in the post-test.

After comparing the result in the pre-test and post-test, the researcher concluded that there was a significant progress in students' reading comprehension by using buzz group



technique. The research about buzz group technique in improving students' reading skill had been conducted by many researchers previously, one of them was Milaningrum (2012) who conducted research in SMP Negeri 7 Surakarta which entitled "Improving Students' Reading Comprehension by Using Buzz Groups Technique (A Classroom Action Research Conducted at the Seventh Grade of SMP Negeri 7 Surakarta in the Academic Year of 2010/2011)". She basically focused on the effectiveness of this strategy in order to identify the class situation when buzz group technique is used in reading classroom. The result shows that the buzz group technique practically can improve students' reading comprehension achievement in finding detailed information, identifying the main idea and identifying communicative purpose of text. Therefore through buzz group technique the students became more active.

By understanding the explanations above, the researcher tried to apply this strategy in SMP Negeri 19 Palu. Yet it was different from the previous research, the researcher emphasized on the use of buzz group technique. However, after applying this strategy, the researcher found that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test. The achievement of the students in post-test was greater than the students achievement in pre-test. This implies that the students' reading comprehension is getting better and therefore, it can be concluded that the buzz group technique could be used in improving students' reading comprehension.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Referring to the findings of this research, it can be concluded that the use of buzz group technique can improve the students' reading comprehension of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 19 Palu. It can be proved by the result of t-counted (8.341) which is greater than t-table (1.729). In addition, the mean score of the post-test (75.975) was greater than the students' mean score of the pre-test (66.75). It indicates that the reading comprehension of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 19 Palu improved.

Based on the conclusion, the researcher would like to offer some ideas for those who are involved in English teaching learning process. First, teaching reading comprehension should be presented as interesting as possible. Buzz group technique could be one option to be applied in teaching reading comprehension. Second, vocabulary teaching should be considered as the important component in language teaching, and should be taught intensively by using interesting technique. The last, buzz group as a technique could be applied in teaching four language skills, reading, listening, speaking, and writing. It depends

on teachers' creativity in extracting and designing the elements which will be used with the material.

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